



October 2006 Newsletter

News You Can Use...



Assemblymember Joe Coto's 2nd Annual Healthy Children's Day

Great Participation at Coto's 2nd Annual Healthy Children's Day



Over 900 families took advantage of the free passes offered by Assemblymember Coto to the 2nd Annual Healthy Children's Day at the San Jose Children's Discovery Museum. In addition to the wide variety of activities offered by the Children's Discovery Museum, families were able to have their youngsters' eyes checked, obtain information on free health insurance programs for children, and have their children fingerprinted and registered with Child Quest. The San Jose Police Department Crime Prevention

Unit Community Van parked outside the Museum and officers were available to provide safety tips to parents and respond to questions.

In order to stress the importance of family literacy, Assemblymember Coto spent time talking with parents and reading a story to kids. Children received a Coto Healthy Children's back pack filled with coloring books and other gifts after their fun-filled day.

The Children's Discovery Museum staff was excited about the large number of families in attendance and pleased that many were first time visitors and excited about coming back.

This event was a success because of the work of many partners - San Jose Children's Discover Museum, PG&E, Comcast, AT&T, PhRMA, San Jose Police Department Crime Prevention Unit, the Santa Clara Valley Health Plans, Child Quest, American Academy of Optometry representatives Dr. Fishman and the Coto volunteers.

Seven Coto Bills Signed Into Law

Seven of Assemblymember Coto's bills were signed into law this past month. The bills included:

AB 2117 (English Learners) - provides \$20 million for a three year study of 25,000 California students to document best practices in English Learner education. This bill is a key piece of legislation from the Assembly Education Committee this year, co-authored by all eleven Committee members. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation have agreed to fund the design of the



evaluation process for this project.

AB 1895 (Surplus Property) - allows the Oak Grove School District to use the sale of surplus property for one time general fund purposes determined by the district board of trustees.

AB 1851 (Healthy Families) - restores the statutory authorization for health plans, children's groups and teachers to enroll children in public health insurance. To date at least 150,000 children have been able to receive health, dental and vision services through this program. Legislation was needed to remove the sunset and allow the program to continue.

AB 2435 (Santa Clara Valley Water District) – removes an archaic budgetary requirement that will enhance the water district's board accountability.

AB 2641 (Sacred Sites) - provides additional protection to Native American burial sites. While federal law exists that protects Native American sacred burial sites in specific circumstances, AB 2641 will strengthen those protections in the state and ensure the preservation of sacred burial grounds while enabling the state to achieve its development goals.

AB 2250 (Mobilehome Park Inspection Program) - removes the January 1, 2007 sunset date on the Department of Housing and Community Development's Mobilehome Park Maintenance Inspection Program. The program serves as an effective means of cleaning up problem parks and ensuring compliance with current health and safety standards and was supported by park owners and resident groups.

ACR 114 (Diabetes and Obesity Task Force) establishes a Legislative Task Force on Diabetes and Obesity, to study the factors contributing to the high rates of diabetes and obesity especially among Latinos, African-Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans in this country and recommend ways to address the problem.

Support For Low Performing Schools

SB 1133 (Torlakson) is a significant piece of education legislation that will help low performing schools. It is the negotiated result of CTA's suit against the Governor for money not paid back to education over the past two years. This bill will provide up to \$1,000 per student in low performing schools for the next seven years. This major investment in turning around many of the State's 1,600 lowest performing schools could include about a dozen schools qualifying schools in the 23rd Assembly District. The bill's authors (including CTA and the Governor's education secretary) expect that 500-600 schools will be funded through an application process. The plans presented by the applying schools must center on class size reduction, staff development, counselors ratios of 300-1 and an experienced and well-qualified teacher work force.

Remember To Vote



Reminder: Election Day is approaching quickly. Now is the time to register to vote if you aren't registered. If you are a registered voter, you might want to consider registering as an absentee voter. Busy schedules combined with long lines at the polls on Election Day can make voting stressful. Voting absentee allows you to vote at home at your convenience. The last day to request an absentee form is **October 29th**. To request an Absentee Voting form or to learn more about the upcoming election please visit your neighborhood library. The San Jose Libraries offer a number of services to help residents become registered and informed about this year's election.

Here is a list of what you can do at any local library:

1. Download your online voter registration form or complete it online;
2. Obtain absentee ballot information;
3. Find out which precinct you live in and your polling location;
4. Get informed about electoral issues at all levels;

5. Learn about the electoral process;
6. Get the latest updates on the state initiatives and information on local candidates;
7. Learn about local ballot measures and upcoming referenda;
8. Find out about your local elected officials' voting records and how you can contact them;
9. Obtain information about debates and community forums on local or state issues; and
10. Connect with state and local civic organizations like the League of Women Voters

The last day to register to vote for the November Election is Monday, October 23 – be sure to exercise your right to vote.

Stay Safe on Halloween

Halloween has become the second most celebrated event of the year, after Christmas. It is a day in which both adults and children are able to enjoy the activities of dressing in costumes, sharing treats and attending parties. To make sure everyone has a fun and safe day, parents are reminded to take the following precautions:



- Select costumes that are made of flame retardant material;
- Make sure children's costumes are bright and have reflector strips so that they are visible at night;
- Accompany small children as they go from house to house "Trick or Treating";
- Give older children flashlights to make them more visible;
- Warn your older children not to go inside anyone's home or trick-or-treat alone, to stay in familiar neighborhoods, to go only to homes with porch lights on, to remove their masks when walking from house to house so they can see better, to cross streets at corners only and never between parked cars, and not to accept rides from strangers.
- Make sure that all candy is packaged, toss out loose candy or any that looks suspicious.
- Instruct children not to eat any treats until they return home and you have had a chance to check it.

Let's make this Halloween a safe and fun one for everyone. Happy Halloween!

Coto Community Spotlight



Teresa Alvarado was named the first ever executive director of the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley (HFSV) earlier this year. Alvarado was selected by the HFSV Board of Directors after a year-long national search. The eight-year-old foundation was at a point where they needed to someone with vision to strengthen their role in the community. The Foundation has established a solid track record in the Silicon Valley Latino community. In a press release last spring, Peter Hero, president of Community Foundation Silicon Valley, which works closely with the HFSV stated, "The Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley has a long tradition of understanding and supporting the needs of the Latino community in our region, Teresa is a dynamic leader with deep roots in our community. Her experience and reputation are what an organization like HFSV needs at this moment to leap to the next level." Alvarado commented, "HFSV's long history and reputation are key factors that attracted me to this position and are critical to the future success of the organization."

Prior to being appointed as executive director, Ms Alvarado worked as a government relations liaison for the San Jose region of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). She worked closely with elected officials, local governments, community leaders in Silicon Valley, and nonprofit agencies in the region. Alvarado also volunteered to serve on many community boards and commissions. She served on the board of directors for the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley for six years, including two years as president.

Ms Alvarado was named San Jose Woman of the year (2005), received the Freedom Fighter Award by the NAACP of Silicon Valley (2005), and the Bank of America Neighborhood Excellence Initiative Local Heroes Award (2005). Her service and dedication are a beacon of inspiration for many community leaders in the 23rd Assembly District and the greater Silicon Valley.

“Teresa understands the needs of the community and how to get things done”, said Assemblymember Coto. “I’m confident she will continue to make a significant difference for our community.”

Assembly District 23 Loses a Great Leader

On August 13, 2006, San Jose lost a great community leader, Miriam Ayllon. Miriam died while whitewater rafting with friends in Bolivia. Miriam was a pillar of the community and an avid women’s rights advocate in San Jose. She gave up her time to help those not as well-off, and was duly appreciated for her efforts and warm-hearted, devoted character. She started numerous organizations to help the less fortunate women and children of Bolivia, such as the Latino Coalition of Silicon Valley, an orphanage—Casa de la Alegria, and a Bolivian women’s cooperative. She also worked at the Mexican American Community Services Agency and the Santa Clara branch of the VTA (Valley Transportation Agency). Those close to Miriam said her compassion and altruism were evident at the young age of 13, when a friend noticed how she was willing to help out those less fortunate and saw it as more of a gift than a chore. Miriam moved to the U.S. in 1977, and upon meeting her husband, started a school for ESL students. They moved to San Jose in 1988 and there Miriam gave birth to her son Huascar. But even motherhood didn’t sway her passion and motives: her husband, Marvin Castro says of her, “She wanted justice. She was always looking for something better for everyone else.” Lupe Solis, a co-worker of Miriam at the VTA, witnessed Miriam’s selfless acts for others, and commented, “You just felt good being around her.”



We would like to extend our condolences to her family. Miriam will be sorely missed by many throughout the world.

Coto Community Bulletin Board

Cinema St. James

Thursday evenings, Sept. 14-Oct. 19
St. James Park



Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. library tours –

The library has more to offer than 1.5 million items in its collections. Come see nice views, explore California and local history collections, visit the Beethoven and Steinbeck centers, and view more than 30 pieces of public art. The first Saturday tour of each month is an art study tour, focusing on pieces by Mel Chin. 11:30 a.m., Wednesday-Thursday; 2 p.m., Saturday. Free. 150 E. San Fernando St. 808-2181

First Thursdays of the Month – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library presents “First Thursdays” – A reading with Steinbeck Fellows: Syda Patel Day, Charles McLeod, and Kara Levy. Sponsored by the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies. 7-9 p.m. Program Room 550, 5th Floor, 180 E. San Fernando St. Free. Danelle Moon at 808-2062.

Every Thursday – Women's History – Dramatic readings, poetry and discussions. 7:15 p.m. First Unitarian Church of San Jose, 160 N. Third St. Free. 292.1172.

South First Fridays

First Friday of every month (Nov. 3, Dec. 1)
8 p.m. until late Galleries in the SoFA District from 300 - 520 S. First St.
www.SouthFirstFridays.com 271-5151

An eclectic evening of arts and culture on the First Friday of every month in downtown San Jose's SoFA district. Participating galleries include: Anno Domini, GreenRice Gallery, MACLA, San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art and San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles. Free and open to the public.

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